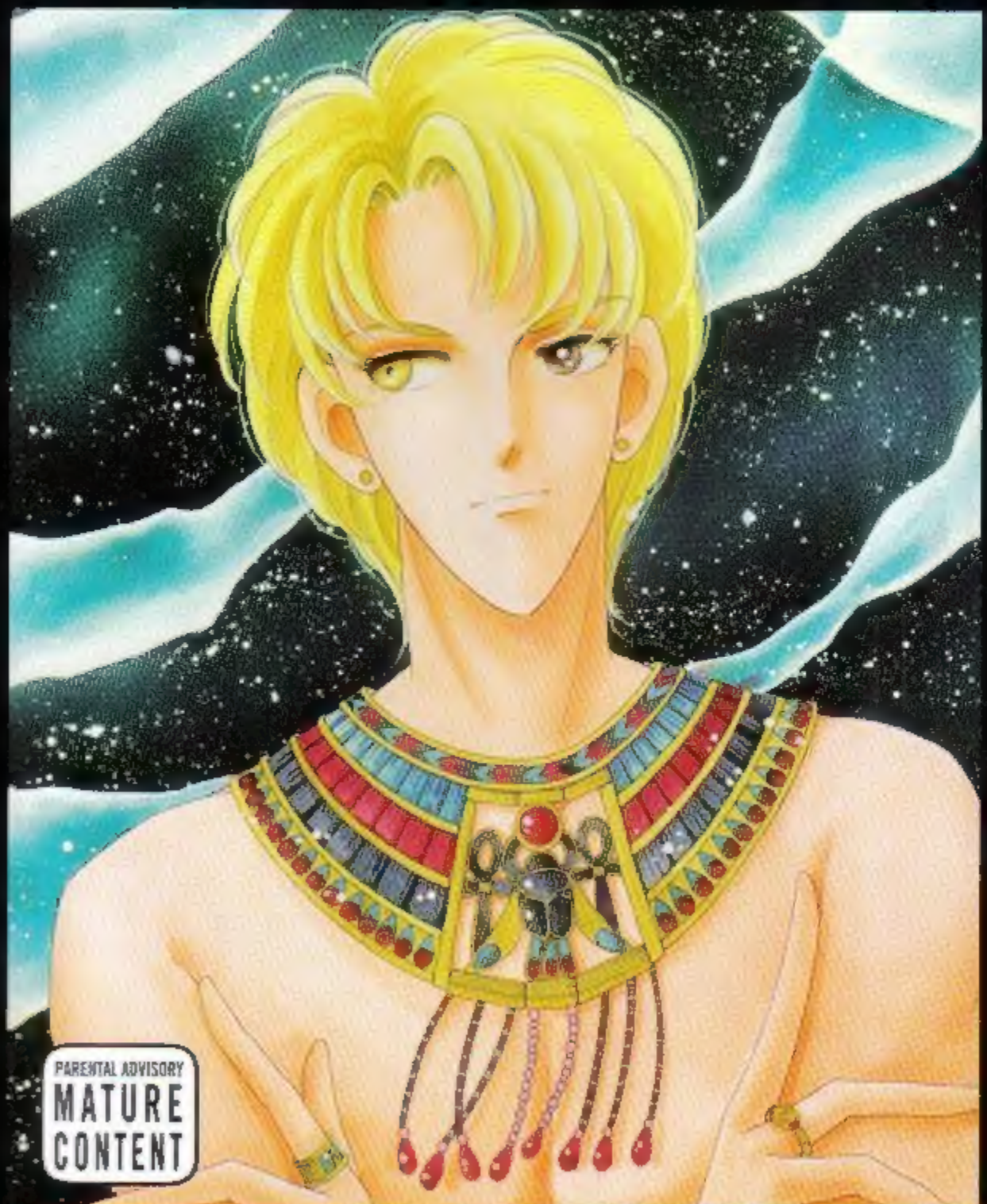
VIZ media

shôjo

RED RIVER



PARENTAL ADVISORY
MATURE CONTENT

18

story and art by **Chie Shinohara**

RAMSES IS COMMANDING THE EGYPTIAN FORCES?
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
I MEAN, ARE YOU SURE IT'S USER RAMSES?
YES, MA'AM
WE HAVE CONFIRMED THAT...
...IT IS INDEED THAT VERY PERSONAGE.

VERY DISTURBING NEWS!
SHE CAN SAY THAT AGAIN! CLEVER RUSES MIGHT FOOL OTHER COMMANDERS, BUT...
...IF RAMSES IS COMMANDING THE EGYPTIAN FORCES, I HAVE NO CHANCE OF DEFENDING UGARIT!

RUSAFA!
HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO BUILD A DEFENSIVE LINE?
ONE THAT WOULD HOLD UP AGAINST THE EGYPTIAN MAIN UNIT WOULD REQUIRE FOUR TO FIVE DAYS, ISHTAR.
HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR THEM TO GET HERE FROM THE ORONTES RIVER?
I WOULD SAY TWO DAYS...
WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME!
KHALEB IS THE NEAREST HITTITE FORTRESS CITY, RIGHT?
CONTACT PRINCE TELIPINU AND ASK HIM TO SEND REINFORCE-MENTS IMMEDIATELY!
WHAT CAN I DO AGAINST RAMSES?
SEND A MESSENGER TO HATTUSA AS WELL!

I'LL SEND A MESSENGER TO KARKEMISH, TOO.
MY MAIN UNIT IS STATIONED THERE!
YES MA'AM.
HADI...
...TELL THE UNIT LEADERS TO EVACUATE THE VILLAGERS.
I REFUSE TO LEAVE!
I HOPE THE HITTITE EMPIRE VANISHES!
TAKE HIS EXCELLENCY TO A SAFE LOCATION.
DON'T YOU TOUCH ME!
YOUR EXCELLENCY, AS I'VE TOLD YOU REPEATEDLY, OUR KING MURSILI II DID NOT KILL YOUR DAUGHTER.
I WANT TO WITNESS THE ANNIHILATION OF THE HITTITE TROOPS!
DON'T TOUCH ME!
YOU MUST LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.

I AGREE! I UNDERSTAND THE SORROW HE FEELS, BUT...
...A KING CAN'T LET HIS COUNTRY FALL INTO RUIN WHILE HE WALLOWS IN GRIEF!
HMPH! I PITY UGARIT FOR HAVING SUCH A FOOLISH KING.
KING ARHALBA MUST HAVE LOVED HIS DAUGHTER VERY MUCH.
PRINCESS YURI?
IT'S NAKIA WHO TOOK CALLOUS ADVANTAGE OF IT.
AND THAT LEAVES LITTLE HOPE THAT PRINCESS ENDRA IS STILL ALIVE.
NAKIA WOULDN'T HESITATE TO KILL HER!

IT WILL TAKE FIVE DAYS TO ESTABLISH A PROPER DEFENSE, BUT ONLY TWO DAYS FOR THE EGYPTIANS TO REACH HERE.
THREE DAYS...
...SEVENTY-TWO HOURS... THAT'S HOW LONG WE HAVE TO DELAY THE EGYPTIAN ADVANCE IF WE HOPE TO HOLD UGARIT.
RIGHT NOW, IT'S VITAL WE DIRECT ALL OUR EFFORTS TO DEFENDING UGARIT.
BUT DEALING WITH NAKIA WILL HAVE TO WAIT.
THAT'S TRUE.
I CAN'T...
...ALLOW THE EGYPTIANS A TRIUMPH SO EARLY IN THE CAMPAIGN.

GET MOVING, EVERYONE!
THE EGYPTIANS WILL BE HERE SOON!
EVERYONE IN THE CASTLE MUST EVACUATE!
WE HAVE ASSIGNED HITTITE SOLDIERS TO ESCORT YOU TO SAFETY!
GRAB
STAY FOR A BIT. WE'LL SHOW YOU A VERY NICE TIME.
HOW NICE! ♡
HEY! THIS IS NO TIME FOR FOOLISHNESS!
I BET YOU'RE A HIGH-RANKING OFFICER.

!!
SOLDIERS ALWAYS CRAVE THE COMFORT OF WOMEN DURING WARTIME, AM I RIGHT?
WE'RE HERE TO LOOK AFTER THE SOLDIERS WHO WILL BE ARRIVING.
OH, COME NOW, YOU KNOW WHY.
WHY ARE YOU WOMEN EVEN HERE?
YOU MUST EVACUATE NOW OR YOU'LL BE KILLED!
PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE SOMEONE LESS... EXPERI-ENCED?
OH DEAR, NOT INTER-ESTED?
SHOVE
...
ONE OF THOSE GIRLS OVER THERE MIGHT SUIT YOU, THEN.

HOW MANY OF YOU ARE THERE?
THIRTY PROFESSIONAL PROSTITUTES AND ABOUT TWENTY AMATEURS.
WE WILL SATISFY YOU, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, I GUARANTEE.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO EXAMINE THE GOODS BEFORE YOU CHOOSE?
STOP IT. THERE'S NO NEED.
PUT YOUR CLOTHES BACK ON AND GET READY TO LEAVE.
WELL, AREN'T YOU HARD TO PLEASE.
OUR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF DOESN'T APPROVE OF THIS SORT OF THING...
...AND, IN ANY EVENT, OUR MEN DON'T NEED YOUR SERVICES.

YES, ISHTAR.
I SUPPOSE KING ARMALBA BROUGHT THEM HERE TO REDUCE THE SOLDIERS' READINESS.
THIS PLACE WILL BECOME A BATTLEFIELD ONCE THE EGYPTIANS ARRIVE.
WHAT ?
THERE ARE FIFTY... UM, WORKING WOMEN HERE?
WE CAN'T HAVE ANY CIVILIANS HERE!
A FEMALE COMMANDER ?
HUH?
LISTEN UP, SWEETIE.
LET ME GIVE YOU THE LAY OF THE LAND.

SOME WOMEN ARE SOLD INTO PROSTITUTION WHEN THEIR COUNTRIES ARE INVADED.
HAVE NO OTHER RECOURSE THAN TO WORK AS PROSTITUTES IN ORDER TO FEED THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES.
BUT IT'S NOT FOR EVERYONE.
VERY WELL. THOSE WHO WISH TO STAY MAY DO SO
THAT'S MY SMART COMMANDER. ♡
I EXPECTED WOMEN OF YOUR PROFESSION, TO BE MUCH GLOOMIER.
WELL, PERSONALLY, I LOVE MY WORK.
FRANKLY MOST PROSTITUTES HATE THE BUSINESS.
THOSE GIRLS WHO WERE FORCIBLY BROUGHT HERE CAN BE SENT HOME.
BUT AS FOR THE REST OF US, THIS IS OUR JOB, OUR LIVELIHOOD.
HOME WOULD LEAVE US WORSE OFF THAN LETTING US STAY.
I DON'T
IS THAT SO?
AND IN OUR RACKET SOLDIERS AWAY FROM HOME MAKE THE BEST CUSTOMERS.
MEN NEED WOMEN FROM TIME TO TIME. IT'S JUST A FACT, KITTEN.
I'M SORRY I DIDN'T REALIZE THAT.
OH! I DON'T VISIT THEM *MYSELF*, ISHTAR!
MOST ARMIES DO TACITLY PERMIT THEIR SOLDIERS TO VISIT BROTHELS.
UM.
R.U.S. RUSAFA?

ALL RIGHT MEN, LISTEN UP!
YOU WILL NOT MISTREAT ANY WOMAN, FRIEND OR FOE!
We won't, lantar!
As if we would!
IF YOU DO, I PROMISE YOU'LL REGRET IT!

LET'S BE CLEAR.
DEAL AS YOU MUST WITH ENEMY SOLDIERS!
WE ARE HERE TO DEFEND OUR ALLIES, NOT BRUTALIZE THE INNOCENT!
BUT TAKE NO LIBERTIES WITH WOMEN AND CHILDREN!

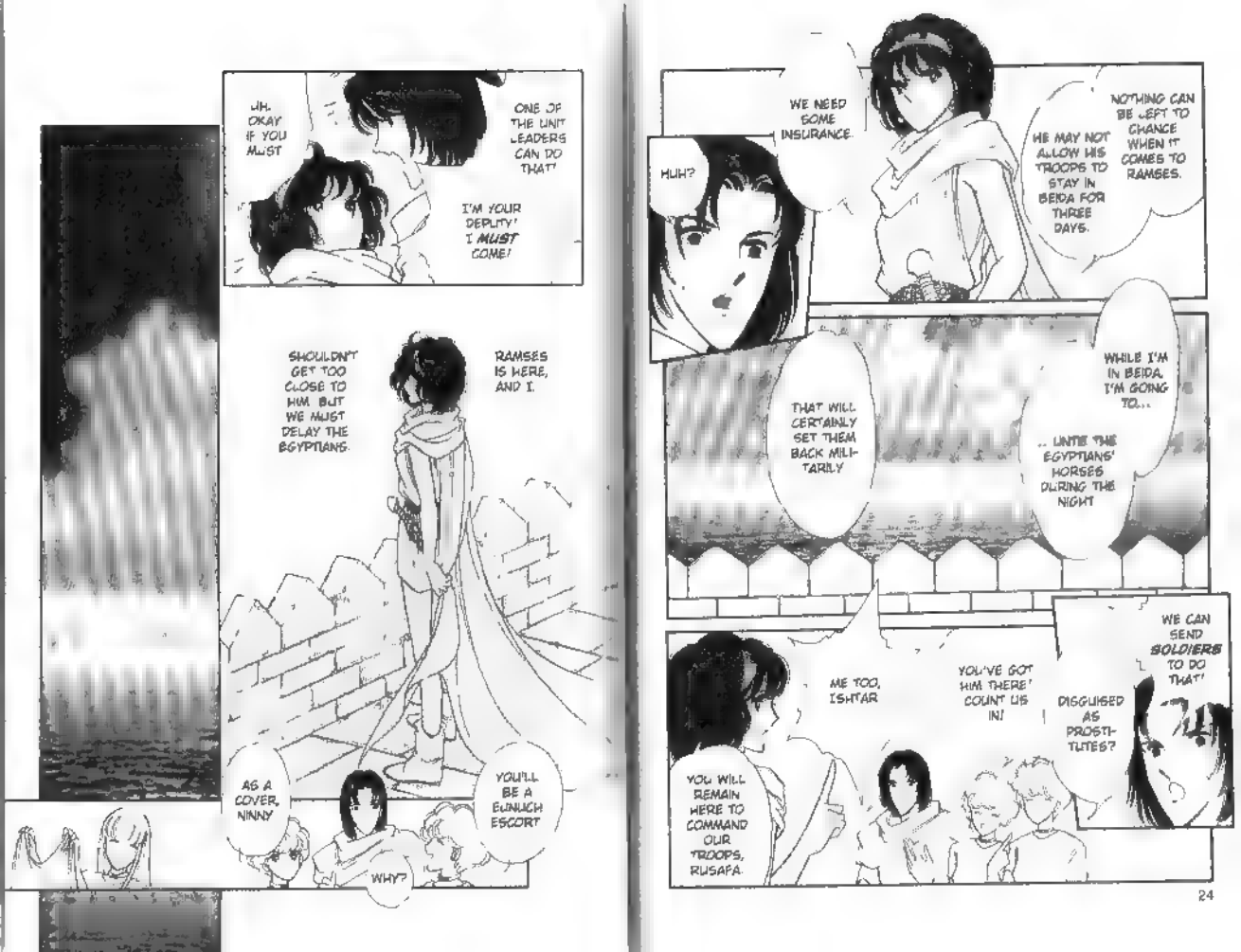
BUT IT'S THAT OR STARVATION. THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS, YOU MIGHT SAY
THAT BEING THE CASE
WE TRY TO MAKE THE BEST OF IT RIGHT, EVERYONE?
THEY MAKE ME REALIZE HOW LUCKY I'VE BEEN.
THAT IS, IF I HADN'T BEEN KILLED BY NAKIA
IF I HADN'T MET KAIL WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED IN THIS WORLD, I MIGHT HAVE BECOME ONE OF THEM.

WELL, WE THINK.
WE COULD BE USEFUL TO YOU THERE
SORRY, WE GOT NOSY AND LISTENED IN. YOU WANT TO DELAY THE EGYPTIAN ADVANCE, RIGHT?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
BUT WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SLOW THE EGYPTIANS?
USEFUL? HOW?
I MEAN, I APPRECIATE YOUR WANTING TO HELP
LET'S JUST SAY THAT WHATEVER THEIR NATION, MEN ARE MEN.
AND WITH THE HELP OF OUR COLLEAGUES FROM NEARBY TOWNS, WE'LL MANAGE TO KEEP THE EGYPTIAN SOLDIERS DISTRACTED FOR A WHILE
THAT'S BEST NOT DISCUSSED IN MIXED COMPANY
WE WOULDN'T WANT TO SHOCK A CUTIE LIKE YOU.
EH?

NOW TO TACTICS.
OKAY
SIGH.
ANYONE HAVE ANY IDEAS HOW WE MIGHT DELAY RAMSES?
WE HAVE SO LITTLE TIME, AND SO MUCH TO DO.
WELL...
WE HAVE A PROPOSAL YOU MIGHT LIKE TO CONSIDER

NO DOUBT
I'LL PUT PRINCE PYAGIL IN CHARGE OF THE DEFENSES.
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU, PRINCESS YURI?
WHEW!
THAT I THINK, WILL DO THE TRICK. UH, SO TO SPEAK.
WILL THAT SUIT YOUR PLANS?
ABSO-LUTELY! JUST THE THING!
ME?
I'M GOING TO BEIDA WITH THE LADIES.
I WON'T CONDONE IT! IT'S TOO RISKY!
EXCUSE ME?
YOU CAN'T DO THAT PRINCESS YURI!

JUST LEAVE IT TO US, YOUNG OFFICER!
THAT IS, CAN YOU DISTRACT THEM FOR THREE DAYS?
CAN YOU REALLY DO THAT?
DON'T WORRY
IT'S NOT LIKE WE HAVEN'T DONE THIS SORT OF THING BEFORE
I DON'T KNOW THIS SEEMS. UM. DANGEROUS!
OKAY WE'LL LET THESE LADIES GREET THEM THERE
I WOULD EXPECT THEM TO CAMP THERE THE FIRST NIGHT
THERE'S ONE, A SMALL TOWN CALLED BEIDA.
ARE THERE ANY TOWNS ALONG THE WAY?
VERY WELL RUSAFA, WHICH ROUTE WILL THE EGYPTIANS TAKE?

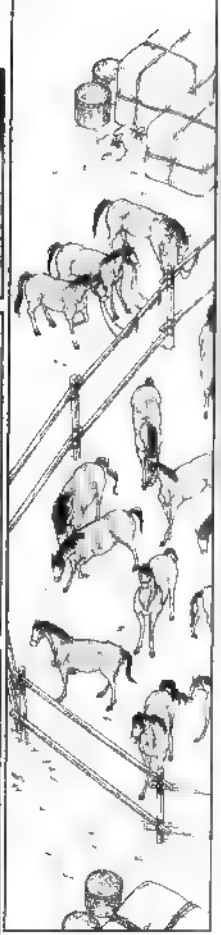

UH. OKAY IF YOU MUST
ONE OF THE UNIT LEADERS CAN DO THAT!
I'M YOUR DEPUTY! I MUST COME!
SHOULDN'T GET TOO CLOSE TO HIM. BUT WE MUST DELAY THE EGYPTIANS.
RAMSES IS HERE, AND I.
AS A COVER, NINNY
YOU'LL BE A EUNUCH ESCORT
WHY?
HUH?
WE NEED SOME INSURANCE.
HE MAY NOT ALLOW HIS TROOPS TO STAY IN BEIDA FOR THREE DAYS.
NOTHING CAN BE LEFT TO CHANCE WHEN IT COMES TO RAMSES.
THAT WILL CERTAINLY SET THEM BACK MILITARILY
WHILE I'M IN BEIDA, I'M GOING TO...
.. UNTIE THE EGYPTIANS' HORSES DURING THE NIGHT
YOU WILL REMAIN HERE TO COMMAND OUR TROOPS, RUSAFA.
ME TOO, ISHTAR
YOU'VE GOT HIM THERE! COUNT US IN!
DISGUISED AS PROSTITUTES?
WE CAN SEND SOLDIERS TO DO THAT!

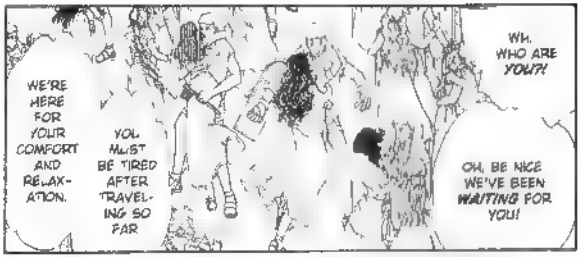
BEIDA, A TOWN IN UGARIT.
SCR UN CH
SCR UN CH
SCR UN CH
THEY'RE HERE!
THE EGYPTIANS ARE HERE!
SOLDIERS!
HELP
WEL-COME!
BA NG
BUT DON'T WORRY WE'LL KEEP THESE SOLDIERS OCCUPIED FOR YOU.
A SOUND REASON.
I HAD TO BE SURE YOUR PLAN WOULD WORK
AND YOU'VE COME TO BEIDA TO PERSONALLY INFILTRATE IN THE GUISE OF A PROSTITUTE
TO START WITH, I'VE NEVER SEEN A FEMALE COM-MANDER IN MY LIFE
HAVE I MEN-TIONED YOU ARE A MOST UNUSUAL COM-MANDER?

HAHAHA
SHEE
YELL
THEY SEEM TO BE HAVING A GOOD TIME
UH-HUH.

THAT'S FORTY HORSES FOR EACH OF US
I COUNT 400 HORSES HERE
LOSING HALF WILL CRIPPLE THEIR MOBILITY
OKAY GUYS, LET'S DO IT

TRY NOT TO GET CARRIED AWAY PRINCESS YURI!
DON'T WORRY I WON'T!




WE'RE HERE FOR YOUR COMFORT AND RELAXATION.
YOU MUST BE TIRED AFTER TRAVELING SO FAR
WH. WHO ARE YOU?!
OH, BE NICE WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!

LEAVE 'EM BE THE MEN COULD USE A BREAK
JUST SO THEY'RE READY TO MOVE OUT TOMORROW
SIR.
THERE ARE PROSTITUTES IN TOWN.

OH, HANDSOME GENERAL, WOULD YOU LIKE TO HIRE ME?
TAKE ME I'M A BETTER VALUE
NOT NOW LADIES
BUT WAIT FOR ME AND I'LL HIRE YOU BOTH.

I'LL BE VERY CAREFUL, GUYS.
DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY!
I SAW SOME BEHIND THOSE BUILDINGS.
THERE ARE SO MANY ACTUALLY TOO MANY WOMEN HERE!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

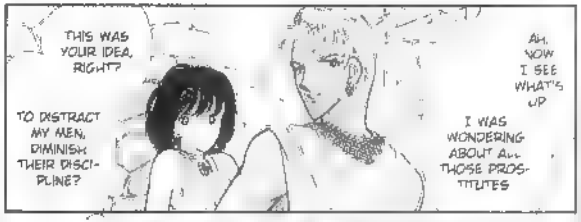
WUP
SLIP
PONK
I'LL FREE A FEW MORE
THAT'S FORTY BUT I'VE STILL GOT TIME

!!
SQUEAK
OH, EXCUSE ME
YIKES!
UH
UD

THEY MAY HAVE CONGREGATED FROM OTHER VILLAGES, BUT THIS IS STILL VERY ODD.
WHY WOULD A TINY TOWN LIKE THIS HAVE SO MANY PROSTITUTES?
AND EVERY HORSE I FREE SETS THE EGYPTIANS FURTHER BACK
THERE'S STILL SOME TIME BEFORE DAWN.

EEE!
THUK
DASH
THAT VOICE

RAMSES!
WELL WELL WELL
I NEVER EXPECTED TO MEET THE HITTITE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND MURSIL! II'S.
MOST FAVORED CONCUBINE, IN A PLACE LIKE THIS!


THIS WAS YOUR IDEA, RIGHT?
TO DISTRACT MY MEN, DIMINISH THEIR DISCIPLINE?
AH. NOW I SEE WHAT'S UP
I WAS WONDERING ABOUT ALL THOSE PROSTITUTES

CAN IT?
BUT THAT CAN'T BE ALL

I NEED TO DISTRACT RAMSES!
THROB
THROB
THROB
THROB
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
RUSAFA AND THE SISTERS ARE STILL OUT THERE FREEING HORSES.

WELL . UM.
HO!
IT SUITS YOU FAR BETTER THAN MILITARY GARB, YURI.
I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU IN A DRESS LIKE THIS, EITHER

SNATCH THIS [redacted] TUNITY TO
TAKE YOU FOR MY OWN, AND DO IT.
WITH-OUT A LOT OF UNNECES-SARY FUSS.
DON'T YOU WANT ME TAKEN PRISONER?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
NOT REALLY uGARIT SCARCELY INTERESTS ME
I'D RATHER

THIS IS AN OPPOR-TUNITY I WOULD BE FOOLISH.
NOT TO SEIZE, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
NO!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO. BUT I IMAGINE YOU DON'T WANT YOUR PRESENCE REVEALED
!!
DON'T FORGET YOU'RE IN A TOWN MY FORCES OCCUPY
DO YOU WANT ME TO SHOUT?
STOP.

THERE GOES MY FIFTIETH
ME TOO, AND A FEW EXTRA.
RUSAFA, WE'VE EA- UNLEASHED FORTY HORSES
HEY GUYS..
..GUESS WHAT!

FWAP
YOU'LL BE EASIER TO HANDLE THIS WAY
WH—WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
I KNOW YOU, YURI. YOU'RE AS WILD AS AN UNTAMED STALLION.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE HIRING US FOR THE NIGHT
HERE YOU ARE GENERAL
OH!
SORRY
NEXT TIME, ALL RIGHT?

I ONCE SAID YOU WERE BORN TO BE A KING'S WIFE
ANY MAN WHO ASPIRES TO RULE A COUNTRY WOULD WANT YOU MORE THAN A KING'S CROWN.
I'M MORE AMBITIOUS THAN THAT I'D NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF IF I LET THIS GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY SLIP THROUGH MY FINGERS
I HAVE NO INTEREST IN FIGHTING FOR A REMOTE TERRITORY OR MAKING SHORT-TERM GAINS.

BE QUIET
WHAT'RE YOU PLANNING TO DO?!
DO YOU WANT MY SOLDIERS TO KNOW YOU'RE HERE?
EVERY COUNTRY WANTS CONTROL OF THIS TOWN!
ECO-NOMICALLY AND MILI-TARILY!
YOU MUST KNOW HOW REGION-ALLY IMPORTANT UGARIT IS.
RAMSES!
LET ME GO!
!!
WELL, THAT MAKES YOU EVEN MORE CHARMING
SQUEEZE
YOUR SHORTCOMING IS THAT YOU DON'T KNOW YOUR OWN VALUE.

LET HER GO!
UM
SH

WITHOUT BLOOD-SHED, IN FACT, WHICH SURELY IS.
GASP
WHAT MURSILI II WOULD WISH
ISN'T YOUR MISSION HERE TO PROTECT UGARIT FROM US?
GIVE IN TO ME, AND YOU'LL HAVE ACCOM-PLISHED THAT
WHAT WAS MURSIL II THINKING.
...SENDING YOU TO THE FRONT LINES?
STOP IT!
I'D RATHER DIE THAN BE YOUR WOMAN!

AFTER CRUSHING YOUR FORCES!
HE'S RIGHT
PRINCESS YUR: WILL BECOME OUR QUEEN.
WHY MURSILI, NO DOUBT QUITE RELUCTANTLY, SENT HIS BELOVED TO THE FRONT.
NOW I UNDER-STAND.
I ALSO SEE YOUR QUEEN DOWAGER'S MACHINATIONS BEHIND ALL THIS
I SEE
MY RESOLVE TO KEEP YURI WITH ME
BUT THAT ONLY STRENGTH-ENS.

SHE IS TO BECOME OUR QUEEN!
KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF HER!
PRINCESS YUR IS GOING TO MARRY OUR KING!
RUSAFA!
HO HO

DASH
FOLLOW MY VOICE!
THERE ARE HITTITE AGENTS IN TOWN!
TAKE TO THE STREETS!
SOLDIERS!
WUP

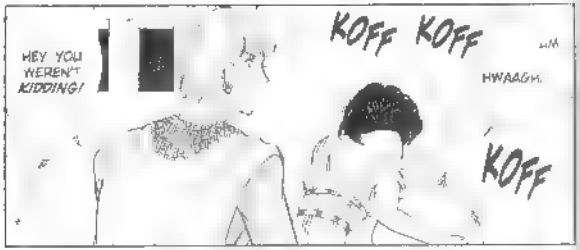
YOU WILL NOT
LET PRINCESS YURI GO, NOW
OR I WILL SLAY YOU RIGHT HERE!
WELL, WELL.
YOU SURE HAVE STOLEN YOUR SHARE OF HEARTS, YURI.

GENERAL! HALF OUR HORSES ARE MISSING!
THEN GO ROUND THEM UP.
IN FACT, NEITHER WILL I
HMPH!
THOSE HITTITES MUST'VE LET THEM LOOSE!
THANKS TO THE LADIES HERE, MY MEN WON'T MIND
THAT WILL SLOW DOWN OUR ADVANCE ON UGARIT
B..AST!
RUGAFA.
PRINCESS YURI
PRINCESS YURI!

RUGAFA!
COME ON!
NEVER MIND THEM, MEN!
RUN, GUYS! RUN!
SECURE THE TOWN AND CHECK FOR SABOTAGE!

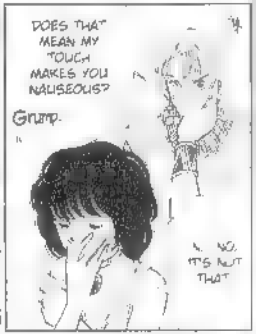
AH.
FLINCH
YOUR BODY HAS BECOME MUCH MORE SENSITIVE, HASN'T IT
I SUPPOSE I'VE THAT SCOUNDREL, NURSIL II TO THANK FOR THAT
AS LONG AS

NO ONE WILL INTERRUPT US THIS TIME
SO IT'S JUST YOU AND ME
YOUR KING IS IN HATTUSA, IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN.


HEY YOU WEREN'T KIDDING!
KOFF KOFF
HWAAGH.
KOFF

THE POSITION OF COMMANDER-IN CHIEF HAS BEEN TOO STRESSFUL. I THINK

I'VE BEEN UNDER THE WEATHER FOR QUITE SOME TIME


DOES THAT MEAN MY TOUCH MAKES YOU NAUSEOUS?
Grump.
N. NO. IT'S NOT THAT

I'VE LOST MY APPETITE EVEN MY FAVORITE FOODS.
JUST DON'T SEEM TO TASTE RIGHT ANYMORE. I'M A MESS
I'VE BEEN NAUSEATED AND.

GIVE UP YUR.
RESCUE IS NOT POSSIBLE THIS TIME.
NOOOO!
UGH!
UNGH.
YOU ARE? BUT
I FEEL SICK.
I'M GOING TO BE SICK!
HUH?

AHEM
THEN, WHAT COULD IT BE?
STRESS IS NOT THE REASON FOR YOUR SICKNESS
EH?
PERHAPS
IT'S NOT HARD TO FIGURE.
THAT YOU [redacted] HAVE TAKEN EVERY MOMENT POSSIBLE TO BE TOGETHER.
AS MAN AND WOMAN. THAT MAY WELL BE THE REASON FOR YOUR SYMPTOMS.
MY SYMPTOMS
YOU MEAN.
OH!

I'M PREGNANT?
WITH KAIL'S BABY?
uh.

I HAVE NEWS YOUR HIGHNESS!
ABOUT ISHTAR? IS SHE BACK?

BUT WHAT? WHAT'S THE NEWS?
NO SIR, BUT
MAL!!
...ML ARRIVALS FROM HATTUSA.

THE KING'S PALACE, UGARIT...

THERE'S BEEN NO NEWS FROM ISHTAR?
PACE
PACE
PACE
I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET HER GO IN THE FIRST PLACE!
THE SUN WILL BE UP SOON.
SHE SHOULD BE BACK BY NOW!

BROTHER KAIL!
I MEAN,
...YOUR MAJESTY!
RIGHT BOT
TIMES MA
BY THE WAY WHERE S YURI?

MAL!
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!
HOW'RE OUR DEFENSES HOLDING UP HERE?

I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO ARRIVE THIS SOON.
I'D JUST SENT A MESSENGER TO HATTUSA TO—
YOUR MAJESTY!
PARDON ME FOR NOT WELCOMING YOU AT THE GATE.
I MET YOUR MESSENGER IN KHALEB
TRUTH IS, I LEFT HATTUSA ALMOST AS SOON.
AS YURI HAD SET OUT ON HER MISSION.

RR
RO
AR
HIS MAJESTY HAS ARRIVED!
HIS MAJESTY AND HIS ROYAL FORCES HAVE ARRIVED IN UGARIT!
H. HIS MAJESTY IS HERE!
ROAR
ROAR

I'M MORTIFIED THAT KING ARHALBA THINKS I WOULD HARM HER
AS FOR YOUR MESSAGE
, MY OFFICIALS ARE LOOKING INTO THE MATTER OF PRINCESS ENDRA.
BUT NOW YOU TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION HERE
IT IS MY INCOMPETENCE THAT BROUGHT NOT ONLY ISHTAR
MY APOLOGIES, YOUR MAJESTY!
YOU'VE ARRIVED A BIT LATE YOUR MAJESTY
WELL UH
APOLOGY ACCEPTED. SO, WHERE IS YURI?
WHAT'S WRONG, MALI?
KNOWING HOW RECKLESS SHE CAN BE, I LEFT HATTUSA SOONER THAN I HAD ORIGINALLY PLANNED.
70
I SHOULD'VE DONE WHATEVER IT TOOK TO STOP HER!
I I HAVE NO EXCUSE YOUR MAJESTY!
WHAT?!
YURI DISGUISED HERSELF AS A PROSTITUTE AND INFILTRATED THE EGYPTIANS' ENCAMPMENT AT BEIDA?!
MALI.
I'M NOT SURE ANYONE COULD HAVE MYSELF INCLUDED
YOUR MAJESTY!
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO SEND
71

AFTER THAT YOU MAY HAVE MY HEAD!
NO, SIR SHE DID NOT!
PLEASE ALLOW ME TO RETURN TO BEIDA AND RESCUE HER!
P PRINCESS YURI WAS.
BEEN CAPTURED BY THE EGYPTIANS!
RUSAFA.
WHAT HAPPENED?
WHAT ?!

WHAT?
THERE'S NEWS!
RUSAFA AND THE THREE SISTERS HAVE RETURNED FROM BEIDA!
YOUR MAJESTY!
WHERE'S YURI?
DIDN'T SHE RETURN WITH YOU?
I'VE BEEN INFORMED OF THE NATURE OF YOUR MISSION, RUSAFA.
I HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE HERE!
HOW DID IT GO?

RAMSES!
YOU PLAGUE ME AS NO MAN EVER HAS!
RAMSES ?
YURI S FALLEN INTO HIS HANDS AGAIN?
YES, SIR.
IT'S AS I FEARED YOUR MAJESTY!
WE TRIED TO RESCUE HER, BUT WE FAILED! WE'RE SO SORRY
ARE. ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
THEY'RE LED BY
GENERAL USER RAMSES
SIR.
RUSAFA, WHO COMMANDS THE EGYPTIANS?
74

DO
OH, FOR
HOW WOULD I KNOW?!
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'S WHAT THIS IS?
SEEMS APPROPRIATE TO THE OCCASION
CONGRATULATIONS?
PERHAPS CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER
MPH

EGYPTIAN ENCAMPMENT, BEIDA
AM I REALLY
WITH KAI'S
CHILD?

WHAT A SITUATION!
I WONDER HOW KAIL WILL TAKE THE NEWS?
AFTER ALL, I HAVEN'T YET FULFILLED THE CONDITION TO BECOME HIS WIFE!
WILL THIS COMPROMISE
DON'T WORRY, YURI.
HUH?
MORE AWKWARD!

HOW CAN I MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?
IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT YOU'RE PREGNANT AND THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO INVADE HGARH
I STILL WANT YOU.
RAMSES.

EXCUSE ME?
I WILL MAKE A GOOD FATHER.
HAVE NO FEARS FOR YOUR CHILD.
THIS IS MURSILI II'S BABY!
YOU'RE NOT THE FATHER!
I HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH THAT
ARE YOU SERIOUS ?!
I ASSURE YOU, I AM.
AND WILL SURELY GROW INTO EITHER A POWERFUL WARRIOR OR A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.
WELL, OF COURSE IT IS.

...IT'S NO LONGER FEASIBLE
WITH HALF OUR HORSES GONE..
SIR
BUT OUR ORDERS COME DIRECTLY FROM THE PHARAOH!
WHAT ABOUT THE ASSAULT ON UGARIT?
HMPH!
AND IF REALITY PERMITTED, I WOULD CARRY THEM OUT
BUT I HOLD THAT INVADING UGARIT WAS NEVER A GOOD IDEA

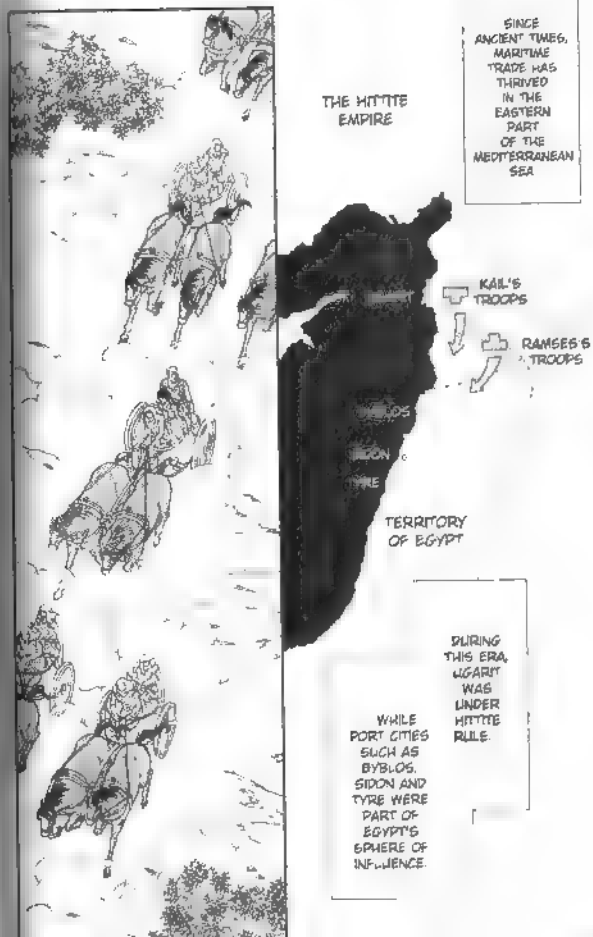
//
AFTER ALL, YOUR NEXT CHILD WILL BE MINE!
ROUSE THE TROOPS!
WHAT? NO!
WE'RE WITHDRAWING!
BANG
ALL RIGHT! WE'RE RETURNING TO EGYPT!
BUT WHY?!
WITHDRAWING?!

BY... SHIP?
DON'T THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY FROM ME
I'LL BE TAKING YOU TO EGYPT BY SHIP
IT WILL BE A MUCH EASIER WAY FOR YOU TO TRAVEL
IT'S ABSURD!
UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF MURSIL II, THE HITTITE EMPIRE IS CAPABLE OF CONQUERING GREAT NATIONS.
MUST EGYPT MERELY SNAP AT ITS HEELS WHILE OUR OWN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS ARE IN CHAOS?
THEREFORE
GENERAL RAMSES
BUT SIR
WE'RE GOING HOME
N. NO!
I'M NOT COMING WITH YOU!
I'LL SHOW YOU THE NILE ON THE WAY, YURI

AND THE QUICKEST WAY BACK TO EGYPT IS BY SHIP.
THEY CAN REACH THEIR CAPITAL, THEBES, IN SHORT ORDER VIA THE NILE
NOW THAT HE'S GOT YUR, RAMSES WILL PULL HIS TROOPS OUT
EXCUSE ME, YOUR MAJESTY
BUT HOW CAN YOU BE SURE?
RAMSES HAS CAP-TURED A GREAT PRIZE
HE WON'T RISK LOSING IT
MITTANNAMWA, SHUBAS, YOU'LL HELP MA- DEFEND THE CASTLE!
KASH RUSAFA, FOLLOW ME!
YES, SIR!

THE HITTITE ENCAMPMENT IN UGARIT
LISTEN UP!
SHUT DOWN ALL ROUTES FROM BEIDA TO PORT BYBLOS
BUT SIR
PORT BYBLOS IS IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION!
AREN'T THE EGYPTIANS PLANNING TO INVADE UGARIT?

DO WE NEED TO BE IN SUCH A HURRY?
CLOP
CLOP
WE CAN'T GO ANY FASTER, SIR! WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH HORSES!
HURRY UP!
WE MUST GET TO BYBLOS TODAY!
BESIDES, THE HITTITES AREN'T YET AWARE WE'RE WITHDRAWING!
CLOP
CLOP
AM I REALLY BEING TAKEN TO EGYPT? I CAN'T GO THERE!
SIR! L- LOOK AT THAT!


THE HITTITE EMPIRE
SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, MARITIME TRADE HAS THRIVED IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA
KAIL'S TROOPS
RAMSES'S TROOPS
TERRITORY OF EGYPT
DURING THIS ERA, UGARIT WAS UNDER HITTITE RULE.
WHILE PORT CITIES SUCH AS BYBLOS, SIDON AND TYRE WERE PART OF EGYPT'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.

THEY'RE ATTACKING US FROM THE SIDE!
HURRY UP! DON'T BREAK FOR-MATION!
AH!
A PALOMINO HORSE. ?
TA-RUMP
TA-RUMP
TA-RUMP!

A CLOUD OF DUST KICKED UP BY CHARIOTS!
TA-RUMP
WHO ARE THEY ?!
TA-RUMP

FORM TWO GROUPS!
SURROUND THE EGYPT-IANS!

KAIL!
MURGIL? WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?

WHIRR

RATTLE

RATTLE

RATTLE

TA-RUMP
KAIL !!
TA-RUMP
TA-RUMP
TA-RUMP
RETURN YURI AT ONCE!
RAMSES!

WHEE!
KASH!
CONVERGE ON RAMSES FROM BOTH SIDES!
YESSIR!
SURROUND HIM SO HE CAN'T GET AWAY!
KAIL!
SO IT HAPPENS AGAIN!

RAMSES!
YOU NEVER GIVE UP, DO YOU?
MURSILI II!
YOU ALWAYS TURN UP!
KAIL!
KAIL! HELP ME!

BY ENTERING THIS CHARIOT INTO ENEMY TERRITORY...
SAILING'S FAR TOO MUCH...

GRAB
I'M NOT LETTING YOU GO
EVEN IF YOU BITE MY FINGER OFF
AUGH!
CHOMP
LET ME GO!
RAMSES!

SAY WHAT?!
I FEEL SICK. VERY SICK
...UGH.

YOU'RE CLEARLY OUTNUMBERED!
HALT, AND RELEASE YURI!
GIVE IT UP, RAMSES!

...EGYPTIAN TERRITORY! MY COUNTRYMEN WILL SOON ARRIVE TO HELP ME!
STOP ME IF YOU CAN, NURSE!! WE'RE NOW IN.

YESSIR!
BYBLOS ISN'T FAR, AND WE HAVE TROOPS THERE!
FASTER, CHARIOTEER!

TA-RUMP
TA-RUMP
TA-RUMP

YOUR MAJESTY!
GENERAL!
SLIP
WHP
YURI!

UNNH.
YURI!
YURI!
OH.
K. KAIL.

SCRUNNNCH

KAIL!
I'M TOTALLY OUTNUMBERED.
I'M GOING TO LOSE THIS ENCOUNTER.
RIGHT NOW, THE ONLY SANE COURSE OF ACTION IS TO RETREAT
I CAN TAKE YURI WITH ME AND GET BACK TO THE HITTITE LINES HOWEVER
RAMSES!
KAIL!

STOP!
STOP IT, KAIL!
GLOOP
GLOOP
GLOOP
PRINCESS YURI!
PLEASE, GET DOWN!
HUH?
ZING

WUP
TO SETTLE THINGS WITH HIM!

RATTLE
RATTLE
RATTLE
RATTLE
I KNOW YOU'RE ANGRY BUT IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!
PLEASE DON'T GO AFTER HIM, YOUR MAJESTY!
I DOUBT I'M ANY ANGRIER.
THAN RAMSES IS RIGHT NOW

CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
HOVE!
RATTLE
RATTLE
RUSAFA!
GENERAL!
RATTLE

SIR, PRINCESS YURI..
..WAS ONLY TRYING TO
NO, RUBAFA.
HIS MAJESTY IS RIGHT.
I'VE BEHAVED IRRESPONSIBLY
WE'LL DISCUSS THAT BACK AT THE PALACE IN UGARIT
BEST WE DON'T LINGER IN EGYPTIAN TERRITORY
AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF YOU ORDER COVERT OPERATIONS.
WERE YOU THINKING?!
BUT YOU DON'T CARRY THEM OUT YOURSELF!

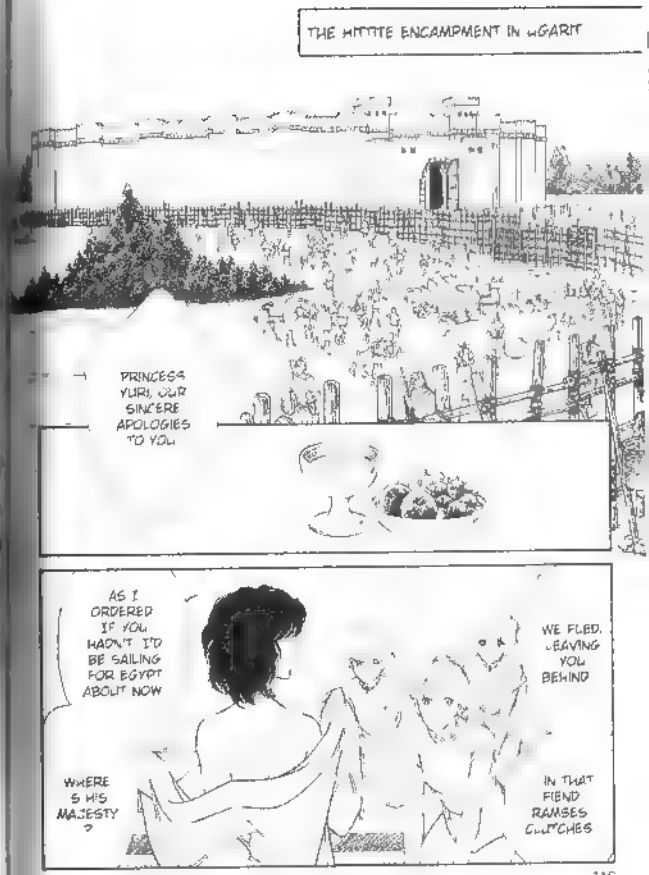
SNICK
THE ONLY REASON I'VE BESTED RAMSES BEFORE
..IS BECAUSE OF THE POWER I WIELD AS A HEAD OF STATE ONLY THAT.
I CANNOT CALL MYSELF THE BETTER WARRIOR.
YURI! WHAT.
I SHOULDN'T HAVE.
I'M. I'M SORRY
KAIL. UM.

WHAT SHOULD I DO? HOW CAN I TELL HIM I WON'T BE ABLE TO SERVE IN THAT CAPACITY ANY LONGER? HOW CAN I TELL HIM.
. . .I'M PREGNANT?

I KNOW GUYS. AND THANK YOU.
THAT'S TRUE, SO PLEASE DON'T
PRINCESS YURI
HIS MAJESTY IS ONLY ANGRY BECAUSE HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

YURI, COME OVER HERE.
I KNOW KAIL FEARS FOR MY SAFETY . .
BUT IF HE WANTS TO MARRY ME HE HAS TO KEEP ME IN COMMAND OF HIS ARMY
GRAB

I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO TELL HIM ABOUT THE BABY
I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT THAT!
HIS MAJESTY IS NO LONGER ANGRY WITH YOU
REST EASY ISHTAR
WE SHOULD EXCUSE OURSELVES.
HADI
HIS MAJESTY IS HERE
HE'S OUT REVIEWING THE TROOPS


THE HITTITE ENCAMPMENT IN UGARIT
PRINCESS YURI, OUR SINCERE APOLOGIES TO YOU
AS I ORDERED IF YOU HADN'T I'D BE SAILING FOR EGYPT ABOUT NOW
WE FLED, LEAVING YOU BEHIND
WHERE'S HIS MAJESTY?
IN THAT FIEND RAMSES CLUTCHES

, AS A TRAIT IN MY FUTURE WIFE
HOW CAN I FAULT IT?
YOU'RE A FINE LEADER, THOUGH YOU'RE TOO DRAWN TO DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN THE ACTION. HOWEVER
WOULD HAVE BEEN QUITE ABLE TO CARRY IT OUT THEM-SELVES.
YOUR COVERT STRATEGY WAS VERY EFFECTIVE BUT THE SISTERS
YURI.
I'M SORRY I RAISED MY VOICE EARLIER.
KAIL.

TWITCH
?!
YURI...?
N, NO!
PLEASE DON'T!
NO, BUT WHY?
KAIL.
WILL YOU BE ANGRY IF I ASK FOR TIME OFF FROM MY RESPONSI-BILITIES AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF?
GULP

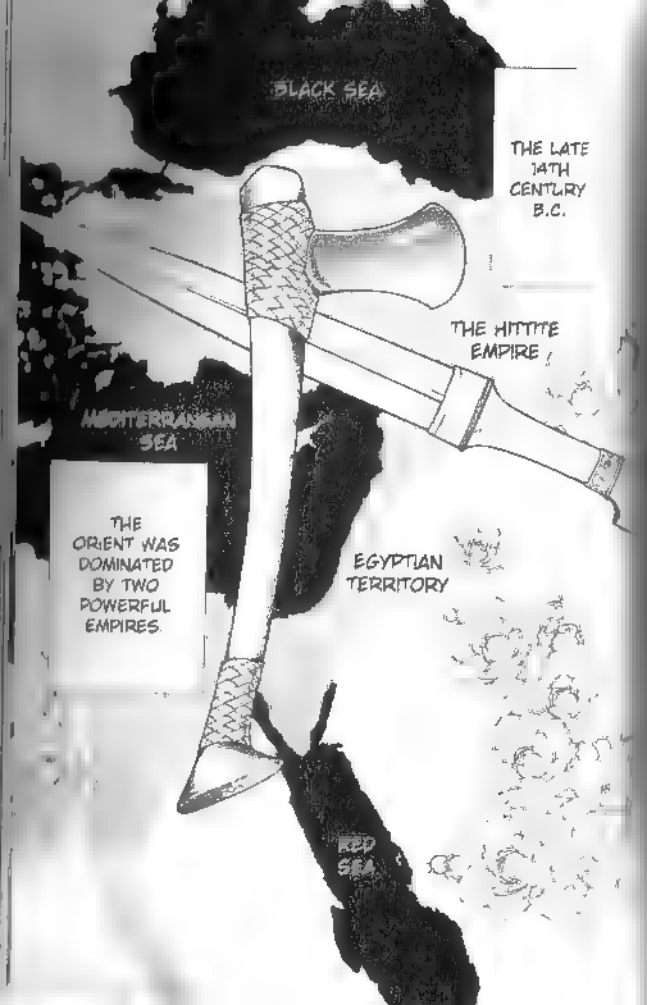
THOOMP
..I MISSED YOU TERRIB..Y.
YURI...

HE, OR SHE...
...IS RIGHT HERE, WITH US.

SOMEONE NEEDS ME MORE THAN YOUR SOLDIERS DO! I MEAN...
I'VE GOT SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT
SOMEONE? WHO?
COME ON, YURI! TELL ME!
RAMSES ?
WHAT? NO!!
WHO IS IT?
THEN WHO ?!

I KNOW THAT BEING YOUR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IS THE PRICE I'M SUPPOSED TO PAY IN ORDER TO MARRY YOU
BUT I'M HAVING YOUR BABY! NARA THE SENATE MARRIAGE NONE OF THAT MATTERS NEXT TO THAT

YOU MEAN, A BABY?


BLACK SEA
THE LATE 14TH CENTURY B.C.
THE HITTITE EMPIRE
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
THE ORIENT WAS DOMINATED BY TWO POWERFUL EMPIRES.
EGYPTIAN TERRITORY
RED SEA

THE OLD KINGDOM OF EGYPT ON THE NILE..
CONTROLLED THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE REGION.
DOMINATED THE NORTH.
WHILE THE HITTITE EMPIRE, AN EMERGING POWER IN ANATOLIA,
POISED FOR A SHOWDOWN TO DETERMINE WHICH NATION WOULD RULE THE ORIENT.
THE FORCES OF THESE TWO SUPER-POWERS FACED OFF AT THE ORONTES RIVER.

YOUR MAJESTY ?
!!
HADI!
HADI! WHERE ARE YOU?!
HADI, HEAD OF CHAMBERMAIDS...

THE HITTITE TERRITORY, UGARIT...
THE PALACE. .
HADI!

KIKKURI,
HEAD OF STABLES AND
AIDE TO THE
HITTITE KING.
JUST A MINUTE! AGO HE SEEMED TO BE REVELING IN HIS RELATION WITH PRINCESS YURI.
SHALA!
Y. YESSIR!
HAVEN'T HE AND PRINCESS YURI RETIRED TO HIS BED-CHAMBER?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHY'S HIS MAJESTY SHOUTING?
SHALA, YURI'S OTHER CHAMBERMAID
RYUI, YURI'S CHAMBERMAID
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS ABOUT?
KIKKURI!
RYUI!
WHAT'S HAPPENED?
THAT'S HIS MAJESTY'S BELLOW!
KASH, CHARIOT UNIT LEADER
RUSAFA, ACTING COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
MITTANNAMWA, INFANTRY UNIT LEADER

BA
N
G
KAIL...
ALSO KNOWN AS ISHTAR MURSILI'S CONCUBINE!
I KNOW HE'S LONGED TO MARRY ME, AND JUST WHEN THAT SEEMED LIKELY...
THIS HAPPENS!
YURI SUZUKI
KAIL'S ANGRY!
I GUESS I CAN'T BLAME HIM.
MADI! WHERE ARE YOU?!
THE HITTITE KING...
...KAIL MURSILI II!

YOU SUMMONED ME, YOUR MAJESTY?
ALL OF US?
I WANT TO HAVE THIS BABY!
HADI!
KAIL, PLEASE!
PLEASE LISTEN
KAIL
I KNOW THIS MESSES THINGS UP
BUT I
...NAKIA WILL WIN THIS BOUNDS BY DEFAULT!

SIR.
KAI?
WHAT ARE YOU
RUSAFA, WHERE ARE YOU?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT!
THAT PRINCESS YURI SHOULD HAVE
M.. MAY I ASK WHAT THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF WILL BE DOING, SIR?
SIR?
YOU'LL TAKE COMMAND OF THE ARMY FOR THE TIME BEING
THE BATTLEFIELD IS NO PLACE FOR HER RIGHT NOW!
SHE WILL BE TAKING SOME TIME OFF.

WANT THE BABY
HE DOESN'T
SIR?
HADI!
WE NEED DRIED FRUITS. THEY'RE VERY NUTRITIOUS.
OH YEAH, AND BRING MILK!
ALSO HONEY LOTS OF HONEY!
HADI, HELP ME THINK OF THINGS YURI SHOULD HAVE!
LET ME SEE..
...WHAT ELSE SHOULD YURI EAT AND DRINK?

I MEAN, YOU.
YOU WANT THIS BABY?
ARE YOU ARE YOU ILL OR SOMETHING?
PRINCESS YURI?!
KAIL?
Y YOU'RE NOT MAD AT ME?
YOU'RE SAYING.
THAT I CAN.

OH!!
THEN YOU'RE HAPPY ABOUT IT?
COME HERE, YURI!
WHAT? OF COURSE! IT'S JUST
THIS NEWS IS SO SUDDEN, I HARDLY KNOW WHICH WAY TO TURN!

WAH!
CONGRATULATIONS, YOUR MAJESTY!
TO BOTH OF YOU!
CONGRATULATIONS.
YES. THAT'S RIGHT!
A MOST JOYOUS EVENT!
EH?
OH. . . ON THIS JOYOUS EVENT, YOUR MAJESTY
LET'S ISSUE A PROCLAMATION!
YES! IT WILL BE CAUSE FOR A NATIONWIDE CELEBRATION!
AS HIS MAJESTY'S FIRST-BORN.
THE CHILD MAY WELL BE THE HEIR TO THE THRONE!
HOLD ON!
A BABY.
STUNNED
CON. .
CONGRATULATIONS!
. . DID I DOUBT HIM? THIS HAS ME ALL TURNED AROUND, TOO.
WHY, OH WHY...
I AM HAPPY. VERY HAPPY!
NOW STOP ASKING STUPID QUESTIONS.

NAKIA, THE HITTITE QUEEN DOWAGER.
SHE HAS IN NO WAY ABANDONED HER AMBITION OF PLACING HER SON, JUDA, ON THE HITTITE THRONE.
YOU ALL KNOW QUITE WELL WHAT SHE HAS DONE TO YURI IN THE PAST IN PURSUIT OF THIS GOAL.
ABSOLUTELY, SIR!
SO KEEP QUIET ABOUT THIS, YOU HEAR ME?
KAIL IS RIGHT. NAKIA WILL SEE THIS CHILD AS A THREAT!

I WANT ITS EXISTENCE KEPT STRICTLY SECRET.
YOUR MAJESTY?!
UNTIL THE BABY IS BORN..
WHY, KAIL?
ONE WORD— NAKIA IF SHE FOUND OUT..
I WOULD DESPAIR OF YURI'S AND THE CHILD'S SAFETY
OH! RIGHT!

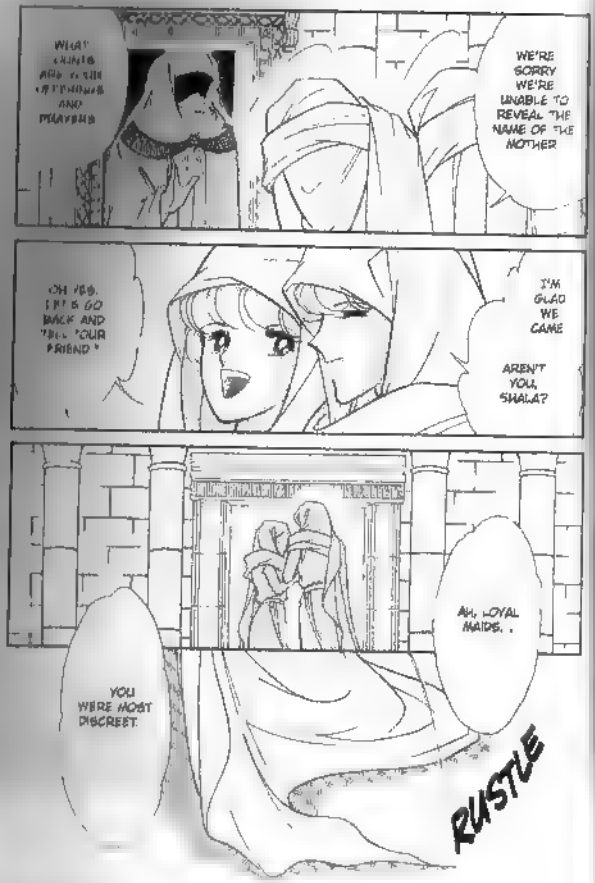
JUST ABOUT!
PRINCESS YURI!
IS THIS EVERYTHING YOU PLAN TO TAKE WITH YOU TO KARKEMISH?
YURI!
I TOLD YOU NOT TO LIFT ANYTHING HEAVY!
OH, KAIL!

HEY
IS IT TRUE ISHTAR WON'T BE JOINING US AT THE FRONT?
THAT'S WHAT I HEARD.
I HEAR SHE'LL BE FOCUSING ON LOGISTICS WHILE HIS MAJESTY COMMANDS THE FRONT LINE TROOPS.
I WONDER WHY? THE ONSET OF HOSTILITIES IS IMMINENT
I DUNNO. MAYBE IT'S A STRATEGIC PLOY ON THE KING'S PART
YOU MAY BE RIGHT
HE DOESN'T WANT TO EXPOSE HER TO DANGER.
MY GUESS IS THAT HIS MAJESTY'S SO IN LOVE WITH ISHTAR.
OH YEAH? I BET TWO ON THE "STRATEGY" THEORY!
CLINK
CLINK
CLINK
ALL RIGHT THEN! I BET A GLASS OF BEER ON THE "LOVE" THEORY!

I feel like a mummy...
WE'RE TRYING TO KEEP PRINCESS YURI'S PREGNANCY SECRET BUT THE WAY YOU'RE FRETTING
COULD GIVE THE GAME AWAY ALL BY ITSELF
UM.
JUST TRY TO TAKE IT EASY YURI
UNTIL YOU REACH KARKENISH, ALL RIGHT?
HA HA HA
DON'T WORRY BROTHER I MEAN YOUR MAJESTY
I PROMISE TO PROTECT PRINCESS YURI FROM ANY DANGERS DURING THE TRIP
SHE'LL BE TREATED LIKE A QUEEN AT MY PALACE, AND THERE WON'T BE A WHISPER ABOUT THE PREGNANCY
SEE, KAIL? I'LL BE FINE
I'M TRULY IN YOUR DEBT, MALI.
PANT
PANT
PANT
YURI!
EEK!
EEK!
AUGH!
BUMP
YAHOO!
DON'T RUN!
AREN'T YOU COLD? WRAP UP!
BE CAREFUL OR YOU COULD HURT YOURSELF!
AHEM
YOUR MAJESTY

KAIL AND I ARE HAVING A BABY!
AT LAST, I FEEL LIKE I TRULY BELONG!
I'M STARTING A FAMILY HERE!
IN HATTUSA WE'D HAVE TO BE ON GUARD AGAINST NAKIA'S NUMEROUS EYES AND EARS
YOU HAVE A POINT, KIKKURI.
IT'S FORTUNATE WE FOUND OUT ABOUT THIS HERE IN UGARIT.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT WE HAVE MORE IMPORTANT CONCERNS.
I'LL REJOIN YOU ONCE I DEAL WITH THE EGYPTIANS.
KAIL, I AM HAPPY FOR US.
BUT I STILL REGRET THAT I CAN'T FULFILL THE PLEDGE I MADE TO THE SENATE AND THE QUEEN DOWAGER. NAKIA WILL BE WITHIN HER RIGHTS TO SAY I FAILED

TEMPLE OF BEL
ANYWAY COME BACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WE STILL HAVE MUCH TO DO.
OF COURSE
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER IT'S A BOY OR A GIRL.
WE JUST WANT THE DELIVERY TO GO WELL.
PLEASE ASK YOUR GOD TO BLESS HER.
. BUT IS IT WISE AT THIS TIME?
THAT IS A NOBLE INTENTION, SISTERS
. ON WHOSE BEHALF IT IS THAT WE'RE PRAYING.
NO ONE AT THE TEMPLE KNOWS US, SO THEY'LL HAVE NO IDEA.
PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT
WE'RE GOING TO THE TEMPLE OF BEL
TO PRAY FOR A SAFE DELIVERY FOR PRINCESS YURI.
BUT THE TEMPLE OF BEL WE... HAVE TO DO.
WE WOULD VISIT THE GODDESS OF ALINNA IN ANATOLIA IF WE COULD.
RYUI? SHALA?
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
OH, BIG SIS!


WHAT CAUSES ARE THE OFFERINGS AND PRAYERS
WE'RE SORRY WE'RE UNABLE TO REVEAL THE NAME OF THE MOTHER
OH YES. I'LL GO BACK AND TELL YOUR FRIEND.
I'M GLAD WE CAME
AREN'T YOU, SHALA?
AH, LOYAL MAIDS. .
YOU WERE MOST DISCREET.
RUSTLE

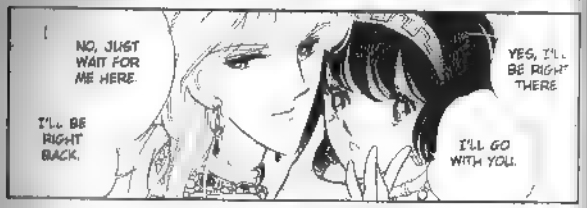
WE'VE BROUGHT OFFERINGS. THEY AREN'T MUCH.
BUT THEY'RE ALL WE COULD SCARE UP.
YOUR OFFERINGS ARE MORE THAN ADEQUATE, LADIES.
I GATHER YOU'RE NOT FROM THIS AREA, SO YOUR FRIEND.
MAY BE NERVOUS ABOUT HAVING HER CHILD IN A FOREIGN LAND. BUT TELL HER TO REST EASY
THANK YOU, PRIEST THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
I ASSURE YOU THAT THE GOD OF THIS TEMPLE WILL WATCH OVER THE WOMAN AS SHE GIVES BIRTH.

PRIEST URHI SHALMA, AIDE TO QUEEN DOWAGER NAKIA
IS THAT SAME MISTRESS, YURI ISHTAR!
AND THE FATHER MUST BE MURSIL II IT IS AN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT
SOMETHING WILL NEED TO BE DONE ABOUT IT OF THAT I AM QUITE CERTAIN.

RUSTLE
IF YOU'VE COME HERE TO PRAY FOR A SAFE DELIVERY
I'VE NO DOUBT THE WOMAN WHO WILL BE GIVING BIRTH
YOU ARE QUITE DEVOTED TO HER, AS A MATTER OF FACT
BUT I'M AWARE OF THE IDENTITY OF YOUR MISTRESS.

CHIRP CHIRP
PEEP PEEP
I CAN'T FEEL ANYTHING PERHAPS IT'S ASLEEP?
HMM.
THEY SAY ONE CAN FEEL A BABY'S MOVEMENTS IN THE WOMB.
OH, IS THAT SO?
THE BABY IS STILL MUCH TOO SMALL TO BE FELT YET.
I I'M ONLY TWO OR THREE MONTHS ALONG
WELL, KAIL, I
I KNOW WHY DON'T YOU HAVE ONE OF EACH?
I WONDER IF IT'S A BOY OR A GIRL?
I DO WANT A SON, BUT A DAUGHTER WOULD BE JUST AS WONDERFUL

YOUR MAJESTY
ALL IS READY TO ESCORT PRINCESS YURI TO KARKEMISH. WOULD YOU SEE
..THAT EVERY-THING IS TO YOUR LIKING, SIR?


NO, JUST WAIT FOR ME HERE.
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
YES, I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.
I'LL GO WITH YOU.

THEY'RE READY TO LEAVE TOMORROW AS SCHED-ULED.
YES, SIR. ONLY PRINCESS YURI'S CLOSEST AIDES KNOW THAT SHE IS WITH CHILD.
IS EVERY-THING UNDER CONTROL?

HE WILL SHIELD HER FROM EVERYTHING
HIS MAJESTY HASN'T SAID ANYTHING TO PRINCESS YURI CONCERNING THE MILITARY SITUATION.
PRINCESS YURI WON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE WEATHER IS LIKE, IF THAT IS WHAT HIS MAJESTY WISHES.
...AS THOUGH WRAPPING HER IN A SILK COCOON.
DOES HE BELIEVE IT'S POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO KEEP HER IN THE DARK ABOUT SUCH MATTERS?
SINCE COMING TO THIS WORLD, I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER HAD SUCH PEACE OF MIND...
NAKIA'S THREATS AND THE COMING CONFLICT WITH EGYPT BOTH FEEL SO UNREAL TO ME NOW
...AS I DO NOW
HADI..
WHAT'S THE LATEST ON EGYPT?
HAS THE FIGHTING BEGUN?
PLEASE DON'T TROUBLE YOURSELF ABOUT THAT, PRINCESS YURI.
KACHA

HOWEVER, AIN'T I SUPPOSE TO BE A CONVOY
THAT WOULD ATTRACT UNWANTED ATTENTION
TAKE WHATEVER YOU NEED WITH YOU
YOUR MAJESTY
NOW AS TO YURI'S PERSONAL GUARD
IT SHOULD BE ONE OF YOU, BUT WITH THE EGYPTIAN SITUATION THAT'S NOT AN OPTION
PARDON ME YOUR MAJESTY!
I'VE SELECTED THE MOST SKILLED OF MY WARRIORS TO GUARD PRINCESS YURI!
SIR!

I BELIEVE THAT'S WHAT HIS MAJESTY
HAS ALWAYS WANTED TO DO FOR HER.
NOW HE MEANS TO DO IT
I'M SO HAPPY THAT
IT ALMOST FRIGHTENS ME.

WHAT IS IT?
WE HAVE VISITORS, SIR.
PRINCE NIQMEPA, YOUR APPOINTED REGENT IN UGARIT
..IS HERE, ALONG WITH THE MAYOR OF UGARIT AND THE CITY'S HEAD PRIEST THEY WISH TO PAY THEIR RESPECTS.
?!
WHY INDEED? THEY WEREN'T SUMMONED.
MAY WE SINCERELY EXTEND OUR
THEY'RE HERE? WHY?
TO YOUR MAJESTY KING MURSIL II?
HEART-FELT CONGRATU-LATIONS.
WHAT ARE ALL THESE.
PLEASE ACCEPT THESE HUMBLE GIFTS TO YOU.
WE CONGRATULATE YOU, YOUR MAJESTY, ON THIS HAPPY EVENT AND WISH GOOD HEALTH TO ISHTAR!
IN CELE-BRATION OF THE COMING BIRTH OF YOUR FIRST CHILD!
HOW..
DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THIS?
IT WILL SOON BE THE TALK OF THE ENTIRE EMPIRE!
WHY, SIR, ALL OF UGARIT'S BUZZING WITH THE NEWS! I DARESAY

THE PEOPLE HAVE HOPED YOU WOULD HAVE AN HEIR
PERHAPS YOU WILL PERMIT A PUBLIC CELEBRATION, SIR?
RAAH
RAAH
SEEMS GOOD NEWS TRAVELS FAST, YOUR MAJESTY
WHAT?! YOU DARE SUGGEST I EXPOSE YURI TO THAT?!
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT.
AND THEY LOVE ISHTAR WILL WE LET OUR FEAR WALL US OFF FROM THEIR HEARTFELT JOY?
RAAH
RAAH
BUT THE NEWS HAS CLEARLY GOTTEN OUT THE PEOPLE ARE WITH YOU.
WE UNDER-STAND YOUR CONCERN, SIR, AND WE SHARE IT
SORRY I THAT IS.
YOUR MAJESTY ?

RAAH
ROAR
WHAT THE. ?
RAAH
ROAR
CONGRATU-LATIONS, YOUR MAJESTY!
CONGRATU-LATIONS, ISHTAR!
LONG LIVE ISHTAR!
RAAH

ROAR
ROAR
ROAR
YURI AND I WILL HOLD A RECEPTION BEFORE SHE LEAVES FOR KARKEMISH TOMORROW SEE TO IT
YES, SIR!
ALL RIGHT

THE PEOPLE DESERVE TO SHARE IN THIS.
AND I KNOW THAT!
YET WHEN IT COMES TO YURI, I AM VERY SELFISH IT'S UNREASONABLE.
BUT I CAN'T HELP IT!

RAAH!
LOOK! THERE'S ISHTAR!
RAAH
CONGRATU-LATIONS, ISHTAR!
ROAAR
CONGRATU-LATIONS TO YOU BOTH!
RAAH

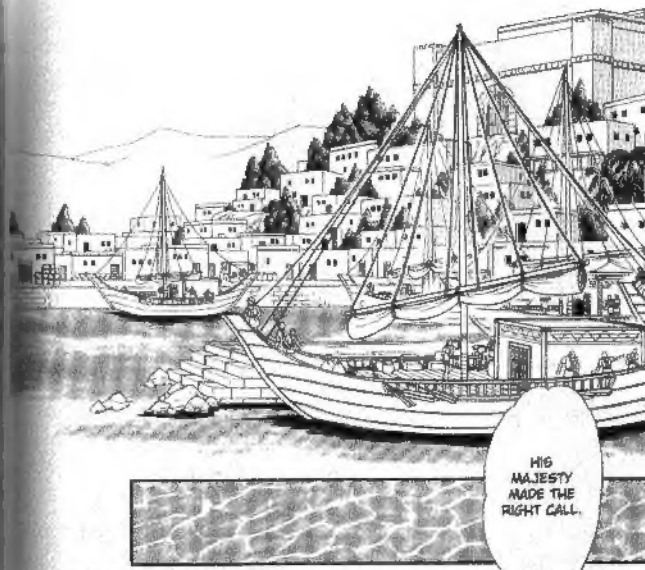
YOUR MAJESTY THE PALACE'S COURTYARD AND GATE AREA ARE FILLED WITH CITIZENS
NOW OFF YOU GO.
OKAY
ROAR
RAH
YOUR MAJESTY! WELL WISHERS ARE ARRIVING FROM NEIGHBORING TOWNS AND
ROAR
THE STREETS ARE FLOODED WITH PEOPLE!

IT'S LIKE I'M DREAMING
HOW DID I DESERVE ALL THIS?
EVERYONE'S SO HAPPY KAIL! IT'S WONDERFUL!
KAIL?
SQUEEZE
KARKEMISH IS A LONG WAY FROM HATTUSA, AND NAKIA
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH, KAIL
BE CAREFUL ON THE JOURNEY YURI.

THEY'RE GETTING AWFULLY EXCITED
OH BROTHER
LET US SEE YOUR FACE!
ISHTAR! PLEASE!
HEY!
STOP THAT! STOP PUSHING!
LOOK! ISHTAR IS. .
WHEEE
AAAGH !

YOU HEARD! MOVE!
MOVE! DO NOT IMPEDE US!
WE'RE HERE TO. .
...CON-GRATULATE ISHTAR!
YOU MOVE, SOLDIER!
WE WANT ISHTAR! LET US SEE HER!
WE WANT TO SEE ISHTAR!
YES, THAT'S RIGHT!
MOVE!
LET US THROUGH!
NO ONE IS ALLOWED NEAR ISHTAR'S PALANQUIN!

...
ROCKS ?!
WHERE IS SHE? WHERE'S ISHTAR?
ISHTAR! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
ISHTAR!
ISHTAR!



HIS MAJESTY MADE THE RIGHT CALL.

PRINCESS YURI WOULDN'T HAVE MADE IT SAFELY OUT OF THE CITY BY LAND.

AGREED.

THOUGH I HAVE TO WONDER HOW THE CROWD GOT SO AGITATED. IT'S AS IF THEY WERE GOADED.

I SUPPOSE SO...

YOU'VE MADE THE RIGHT DECISION TO SEND ME BY SEA.

KAIL, ARE YOU STILL WORRIED?

...AND THIS TIME YOU REALLY ARE LEAVING.

YOU MUST GO BEFORE THE CONFUSION OVER THE DECOY CONVOY ABATES.

CAST OFF MOORINGS!

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, KAIL!

SPRING
RUSAFA ?!
THUD

BWONG
OFF...
...TO SEA!
BWONG
RUSAFA ?!
FLAP
?!
WHY?
WHY AM I STILL WORRIED ABOUT HER?
I KNOW SHE'LL BE SAFE THERE, BUT I STILL FEEL UNEASY. ARE MY FEARS GROUNDLESS?
UGARIT WILL SOON BECOME A WAR ZONE, SO SENDING HER TO KARKEMISH IS THE RIGHT DECISION.

...DID YOU THINK I WOULDN'T GUESS ISHTAR WOULD BE TAKING THE SEA ROUTE TO KARKEMISH...
YOUR MAJESTY, MURSILI II...
...ONCE I LEARNED THAT SHE WASN'T TRAVELING BY LAND? IF SO, YOU WERE WRONG.
AND, SAD TO SAY, YOU WILL LOSE HER...

YOUR MAJESTY!
I KNOW YOU WILL PUNISH ME LATER FOR DISOBEDIENCE...
...BUT I SIMPLY MUST ACCOMPANY PRINCESS YURI TO KARKEMISH!

LOOKS LIKE WE JUST GOT THE JOB.
WASN'T HE ORDERED TO LEAD THE ARMY?

I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU IN KARKEMISH!
KAIL!
MAY YOU ACHIEVE A GREAT VICTORY OVER EGYPT!